

CLAIMS

1. A method for previewing documents on a computer system comprising the steps of :
 - 5 - displaying a main document which contains a first hyperlink; and
 - in response to an indication of the first hyperlink being received by the computer system, displaying a first preview document which document being that referred to by the first hyperlink whilst retaining the display of the main document,
- 10 so that the document referred to by the first hyperlink may be previewed.
2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the first preview document contains a second hyperlink, further comprising the step of :
 - in response to an indication of the second hyperlink being received by the
 - 15 computer system, displaying a second preview document which document being that referred to by the second hyperlink whilst retaining the display of the first preview document,
- so that the document referred to by the second hyperlink may be previewed.
- 20 3. A method according to claim 1 or 2 further comprising the step of :
 - in response to an indication of a displayed document being received by the computer system, removing from display any and all preview documents deriving from the indicated document.
- 25 4. A method according to claim 1 or 2 further comprising the steps of :
 - in response to a selection of a displayed preview document being received by the computer system, substituting the selected preview document for the main document; and
 - removing from display all preview documents.
- 30 5. A method according to claim 3 or 4 further comprising the step of :
 - caching a preview document which has been removed from display.

6. A method according to claims 1 or 2 wherein a hyperlink is indicated to the computer system by positioning a pointer over the hyperlink.

5 7. A method according to claim 3 wherein the document is indicated by positioning a pointer at a location in the displayed document where there is not a hyperlink.

8. A method according to claim 4 wherein the preview document is
10 selected by clicking a pointer at a location in the displayed preview document where there is not a hyperlink.

9. A method according to any preceding claim wherein documents are displayed in windows according to Microsoft® Windows® format.

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10. A system for displaying a preview document referred to by a hyperlink in a main document, the system comprising a workstation, a first document store containing a first preview document and an interconnection means; the workstation being operable to co-operate with the first document store using
20 the interconnection means to access the first preview document and, in response to an indication of the hyperlink being received by the workstation, to display the first preview document in addition to displaying the main document.

11. A system as claimed in claim 10, further comprising a server coupled to
25 a second document store containing a second preview document, the server operable to co-operate with the workstation using the interconnection means, to access the second preview document in the second document store and to download the second preview document to the workstation.

30 12. A workstation comprising a display, data processing unit and user interface, operable according to the method of claims 1-9 to display preview documents.

13. A workstation as claimed in claim 12, further comprising a local document store, the workstation being operable to access a preview document
5 from said document store.

14. A workstation as claimed in claim 12, further comprising a data store operable to cache the content and data associated with a preview document which has been removed from display.

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15. A Web browser application running on a computer system and displaying a main document, the application configured to be operable according to the method of claims 1-9 to display preview documents whilst also displaying the main document.

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16. A Web browser application as claimed in claim 15 wherein the main document is controllable using the standard tools provided by the application.